

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A protecting member for use with a developing device including a developing roller, for developing an electrostatic latent image formed on an  
5 electrophotographic photosensitive member, having an elastic roller portion and a shaft portion supporting the elastic roller portion, said developing device further including a developer regulating member contactable to the elastic roller portion to regulate  
10 an amount of the developer deposited on the elastic roller portion, said protecting member comprising:  
a contact portion provided at a side for contact with the elastic roller portion when said protecting member is demountably mounted between the  
15 developing roller and the developer regulating member; and  
a supporting portion for supporting said contact portion, said supporting portion being provided at a side for contact with the elastic roller  
20 portion when said protecting member is demountably mounted between the developing roller and the developer regulating member,  
wherein said contact portion has a hardness which is not less than a predetermined value and not  
25 more than a hardness of the elastic roller portion.

2. A protecting member according to Claim 1,

wherein said contact portion is elastic.

3. A protecting member according to Claim 1,  
wherein said supporting portion includes a sheet of  
5 polyethylene terephthalate resin material.

4. A protecting member according to Claim 1, 2  
or 3, wherein said contact portion has a thickness of  
0.5mm-2mm, and said supporting portion has a thickness  
10 of approx. 150  $\mu$ m.

5. A protecting member according to Claim 1,  
wherein the hardness of said contact portion is 5<sup>0</sup> -  
45<sup>0</sup> (Asker C hardness).  
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6. A protecting member according to Claim 1,  
wherein said contact portion has a volume resistivity  
not more than 10<sup>10</sup> Ohm.cm.

20 7. A developing cartridge detachably mountable  
to a main assembly of an electrophotographic image  
forming apparatus, said developing cartridge  
comprising:

a developing roller, for developing an  
25 electrostatic latent image formed on an  
electrophotographic photosensitive member, having an  
elastic roller portion and a shaft portion supporting

the elastic roller portion,

a developer regulating member contactable to the elastic roller portion to regulate an amount of the developer deposited on the elastic roller portion;

5 a protecting member including,

a contact portion provided at a side for contact with the elastic roller portion when said protecting member is demountably mounted between the developing roller and the developer regulating member;

10 and

a supporting portion for supporting said contact portion, said supporting portion being provided at a side for contact with the elastic roller portion when said protecting member is demountably

15 mounted between the developing roller and the developer regulating member,

wherein said contact portion has a hardness which is not less than a predetermined value and not more than a hardness of the elastic roller portion.

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8. A process cartridge according to Claim 7, wherein said contact portion is elastic.

9. A process cartridge according to Claim 7, wherein said supporting portion includes a sheet of polyethylene terephthalate resin material.

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10. A process cartridge according to Claim 7, 8 or 9, wherein said contact portion has a thickness of 0.5mm-2mm, and said supporting portion has a thickness of approx. 150  $\mu$ m.

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11. A process cartridge according to Claim 7, wherein the hardness of said contact portion is 5<sup>0</sup> - 45<sup>0</sup> (Asker C hardness).

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12. A process cartridge according to Claim 7, wherein said contact portion has a volume resistivity not more than  $10^{10}$  Ohm. cm.

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13. A process cartridge according to Claim 7 or 12, wherein said developer regulating member includes a resilient metal plate.

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14. A process cartridge detachably mountable to a main assembly of an electrophotographic image forming apparatus, said process cartridge comprising:

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an electrophotographic photosensitive member;  
a developing roller, for developing an electrostatic latent image formed on an electrophotographic photosensitive member, having an elastic roller portion and a shaft portion supporting the elastic roller portion;  
a developer regulating member contactable to

the elastic roller portion to regulate an amount of  
the developer deposited on the elastic roller portion;

a protecting member including,

a contact portion provided at a side for  
5 contact with the elastic roller portion when said  
protecting member is demountably mounted between the  
developing roller and the developer regulating member;  
and

a supporting portion for supporting said  
10 contact portion, said supporting portion being  
provided at a side for contact with the elastic roller  
portion when said protecting member is demountably  
mounted between the developing roller and the  
developer regulating member,

15 wherein said contact portion has a hardness  
which is not less than a predetermined value and not  
more than a hardness of the elastic roller portion.

15. A process cartridge according to Claim 14,  
20 wherein said contact portion is elastic.

16. A process cartridge according to Claim 14,  
wherein said supporting portion includes a sheet of  
polyethylene terephthalate resin material.

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17. A process cartridge according to Claim 14, 15  
or 16, wherein said contact portion has a thickness of

0.5mm-2mm, and said supporting portion has a thickness of approx. 150  $\mu$ m.

18. A process cartridge according to Claim 14,  
5 wherein the hardness of said contact portion is 5<sup>0</sup> - 45<sup>0</sup> (Asker C hardness).

19. A process cartridge according to Claim 14,  
wherein said contact portion has a volume resistivity  
10 not more than  $10^{10}$  Ohm. cm.

20. A process cartridge according to Claim 14 or  
19, wherein said developer regulating member includes  
a resilient metal plate.

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